Surat to Kosamba has been included in the budget. However, in view of augmentation of section capacity in Ahmedabad-Mumbai section by introduction of automatic block signalling system, this project is being regulated as per low operational priority.

Further, survey for doubling of Delhi-Ahmedabad has been taken up to assess the need of doubling of this route.

Railway's surplus manpower

1984. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the World Bank's estimates of Railway's surplus manpower at half a million people;

(b) if so, how new recruitment of 23,500 persons in the garb of improving safety and 35,000 constables in the Railway Police Force is justified; and

(c) why can't the railways exercise the option of redeploying personnel after capsule training orientation programme of existing employees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BASANAGOUDA R. PATIL): (a) to (c) Ministry of Railways is not aware of any such estimate made by the World Bank. However, there are about 4186 surplus staff awaiting re-deployment as on 30.10.03 on the Railways. Surplus staff are retained and redeployed in areas requiring manpower, depending on their suitability as regards qualifications, medical fitness standards required etc. This is a continuous process. The present security scenario of the country has affected the Railways in a considerable measure in ensuring safe train operations. It is essential to strengthen railway in-house safety, security and maintenance systems, which includes RPF as well as Group 'C and 'D' safety categories. The recruitment would ensure more hands being available for essential needs for safety, security and operational requirements.

STD/ISD/PCO booths at railway stations

1985. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a highest bid of tender commission amount